

Green Jobs Corps – Creating a New Generation of New Haven Environmental Justice Leaders
Common Ground – New Haven Ecology Project
WORK PLAN for the EPA Environmental Justice Small Grants Program

A. Project Title and Project Purpose Statement

Last year, a \$30,000 grant through the Environmental Justice Small Grants Program connected the 32 members of Green Jobs Corps – a year-long leadership and employment program – with 35 paid work opportunities, all addressing environmental justice challenges in New Haven, CT. These young people – who live in communities disproportionately impacted by clean air and clean water issues – worked side by side other city residents and organizations to address these challenges. Corps members generated measurable environmental outcomes – planting 168 street trees, stewarding and improving 23 greenspaces, and engaging nearly 300 other New Haven residents, for example. These young people also developed lasting commitment and capacity; more than 50% indicated that they plan to pursue an environmental career or college major.

Now, the New Haven Ecology Project (doing business as Common Ground) requests a new grant to grow and strengthen **Green Jobs Corps – Creating a New Generation of Environmental Justice Leaders**. With EPA support, Green Jobs Corps will take on another 36 jobs, to:

- *Improve air quality, water quality, and access to other critical ecosystem services in urban low-income communities of color by addressing disproportionate access to urban street trees, community greenspaces, and green infrastructure.* Corps members will work with the New Haven Urban Resources Initiative to (1) conduct outreach to neighborhoods disproportionately affected by poor air quality and low tree cover, (2) plant urban street trees in these neighborhoods, (3) work side-by-side with grassroots greenspace groups to increase vegetative cover and improve health, and (4) install and steward green approaches to storm-water management.
- *Improve access to clean water by identifying threats to water quality, engaging and educating residents about these threats, and taking direct action to improve clean water access along New Haven's West River.* Corps members will support efforts of the Connecticut Fund for the Environment and the West River Watershed Coalition to develop and implement a watershed based plan by, among other things, (1) conducting and sharing results of citizen surveys of major tributaries, (2) developing a web-based platform to share information and engage community, (3) planning and leading watershed stewardship activities, and (4) educating peers and adults.

Through this work, Green Jobs Corps will contribute directly to improved environmental conditions. In particular, this work will build resiliency in the face of climate change – using green infrastructure strategies to reduce flood risk, decrease the severity of combined sewer overflows, and prevent reduced air quality. While this application does not focus solely on community climate resilience, it does have significant impact in this area.

In addition to its direct impacts on air and water quality, this project will increase long-term capacity to address environmental injustice. Corps members' experiences will build their capacity as environmental leaders – measurably increasing environmental leadership skills, and putting them on pathways to environmental careers. At the same time, Corps members will support more than 350 residents as they improve water quality and air quality, and educate another 2,500 residents through broad-based outreach efforts.

B. Environmental and/or Public Health information about the affected community

The work of Green Jobs Corps focuses squarely on the City of New Haven, CT – a racially and economically diverse urban community of about 124,000 residents. About one in four New Haven residents live below the poverty line, compared to less than 1 in 10 state-wide.

Approximately 35% of our community identifies themselves as African-American, 43% Caucasian, 5% Asian, 4% two or more races, and 14% other. About 27% identify themselves as Hispanic (of any race).¹ These residents face pressing environmental justice challenges:

- **Air quality.** According to the most recent available data from the National Scale Air Toxics Inventory, New Haven residents are exposed to levels of respiratory hazards and carcinogens higher than their non-urban counterparts across Connecticut and New England. The most recent EPA data also indicate that New Haven is in non-attainment for airborne particulate matter, and the EPA identifies New Haven as an area of elevated cancer risk due to air quality.² Given these data, it should not be a surprise that New Haven has the highest rates of asthma hospitalization in the State of Connecticut, according to a 2012 study from the Connecticut Department of Public Health.³
- **Water quality.** Located within the Long Island Sound watershed, and home to several important urban waterways, surface water quality is a significant concern for New Haven. In particular, the West River and its tributaries flow through dense urban areas before reaching Long Island Sound. Large areas of impervious surface, along with reduced levels of vegetation and reduction in evaporative processes, lead to significant levels of overland flow. In addition, there are approximately 1,400 acres of combined sewershed in the West River watershed; including the overflows that go directly to the harbor just below the mouth of the West River, there are an estimated 106 CSO events per year, with an estimated discharge of 48.5 million gallons of combined storm-water and sewage. Data reported by the State of Connecticut to EPA data make clear that water quality on the West River is impaired – as are at least one of its major tributaries, and the estuary into which the river flows. CSOs, runoff, point source discharges, illicit discharges and failing septic systems are all potential factors causing impaired water quality within the watershed. These water conditions impact the health and quality of life of our city's residents; they make the West River unhealthy for recreational uses, and for aquatic life.⁴

These challenges will only grow in the face of climate change. Average annual precipitation in Connecticut as a whole has increased by .95 inches per decade since the end of the 19th century. Maps generated through the Nature Conservancy's Coastal Resilience Future Scenarios mapping tool indicate with a high level of certainty that even a low level of sea level rise would generate flooding along the 4 miles of the West River closest to New Haven Harbor by 2020. Increased precipitation rates and regularity of intense coastal storms are increasing the regularity of CSO overflows, adding to the water quality challenges noted above. Rising temperatures will also likely exacerbate air quality challenges in cities – including increased levels of ground ozone and changes in particulate matter concentrations – while also adding new, additional health threats to a community already heavily impacted by low air quality.

¹ www.ctdatahaven.org

² EPA data from EJView and the 2005 National-Scale Air Toxics Assessment, both accessed from www.epa.gov.

³ Nepaul, A.N., et al. (2012). The Burden of Asthma in Connecticut. Hartford, CT: CT Department of Public Health.

⁴ Based on data from the US EPA "Surf Your Watershed" online tool.

These challenges have a disproportionate impact on community members living on limited incomes and people of color. For instance, the CT Department of Health study cited above indicates that African-American children have the state's highest rates of asthma hospitalization, and that Hispanic rates of hospitalization are 5.2 times those of non-Hispanics. Neighborhood environmental conditions are an essential factor in these health outcomes. Consider access to the clean air and clean water provided by street trees and greenspaces. Two studies by the Urban Resources Initiative demonstrate that lower income neighborhoods such as Fair Haven and the Hill have less tree cover (approximately 20%) than wealthier neighborhoods like East Rock and Westville (approximately 40%). The disparity in tree cover directly correlates to a loss of ecosystem services – in particular, the amount of air pollution deposited, and the amount of stormwater runoff eliminated. One study puts the value of ecosystem services provided by New Haven street trees at \$4,036,796 per year⁵; this value is simply not distributed equitably.

New Haven residents and organizations are working actively to address these environmental justice challenges. For instance, URI has collaborated with Common Ground and other partners to engage more than 180 young people in paid internships, planting more than 1,700 new street trees across the city. URI also mobilizes more than 50 neighborhood groups per year to create and steward community greenspace projects. CFE is a leader in efforts to improve water quality in the West River and all of our state's waterways – through tidal restoration projects, legislative advocacy, water monitoring, public education efforts, and dozens of other strategies. Common Ground and CFE are both active members of the West River Watershed Coalition, the grassroots group working to improve public access and water quality along the West River.

Through Green Jobs Corps, our city's young people will be able to change the environmental conditions that affect themselves, their families, and their neighborhoods. They will contribute directly to solutions – by planting street trees, improving greenspaces, identifying sources of water pollution, and implementing strategies to address these sources. They will increase the community's capacity to address these issues, by contributing to neighborhood efforts and by engaging in community education activities. Perhaps most importantly, Green Jobs Corps will increase young people's leadership capacity, environmental understanding, and environmental commitment, building our community's long-term capacity to create a healthier environment.

C. Organization's Historical Connection to the Affected Community

The New Haven Ecology Project – the 501(c)(3) home of Common Ground High School, Urban Farm, and Environmental Education Center – is responding to these challenges. Our mission – *to cultivate habits of healthy living and sustainable environmental practice within a diverse community of children, young people, and adults* – is rooted in values that drive the EJ Small Grants Program: community engagement, equity, environmental health. We achieve our mission through:

- The nation's longest-running environmental charter high school, creating the next generation of powerful environmental leaders and successful college students.
- A community environmental education center, helping city residents connect to the natural world and lead healthy, sustainable lives.
- An urban farm, modeling sustainability and providing healthy food to the community.

⁵ Oversee, Suzanne (2007). Assessment of the Environmental Service Benefits of the City of New Haven's Street Tree Population. New Haven, Connecticut: Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Science.

Since our founding in 1992, Common Ground's work has been rooted in the New Haven community. Last year, more than 15,000 children and adults engaged in our community environmental programs. We are committed to make these programs accessible to all members of our community, and particularly to low-income communities of color that are vulnerable to environmental injustice. At Common Ground High School, nearly 70% of our students come from New Haven, nearly 80% are young people of color, and nearly 60% qualify for free or reduced lunch. The children who participate in our school field trip program reflect the diversity of New Haven Public Schools; more than 80% qualify for free and reduced lunch, and more than 80% are young people of color. Green Jobs Corps – the program for which we seek funding from the EPA – reserves 80% of program spaces for young people from low income families.

These programs have a demonstrated impact on the health of the community members who participate. For instance, parent surveys show a 55 point increase in the percentage of students who try healthy foods at home, and a 39 point increase in the percentage of students who choose healthy outdoor exercise, after participating in our after-school children's environmental programs. Last year, our urban farm produced more than 35,000 servings of healthy food, grown without the use of pesticides; through free school lunch and a mobile market serving New Haven's lowest-income communities, we mobilize this food as a resource for community health.

Common Ground is committed to engaging community residents in shaping our work. Common Ground's Board of Directors reflects the diversity of our community; half are people of color, and 83% reside within the City of New Haven. In identifying our strategy for our new mobile farm market, described above, our staff and students conducted door-to-door outreach and met with tenant associations at public housing projects. In developing a new master plan for our 20-acre site, we surveyed program participants, and ensured that more than half of our planning committee consisted of student and community representatives.

The work proposed here reflects this commitment to inclusive community engagement:

- The young people engaged in Green Jobs Corps are all community members themselves. All of these Corps members provide annual written feedback in on this program, and participate in focus group discussions about how to improve program quality.
- Our partners at community environmental organizations serve on the Green Jobs Corps steering committee, helping to set the direction of the program.
- The green infrastructure work in this proposal responds directly to community input.
- The proposed work of the West River Stewards has been developed based on ongoing feedback from the grassroots West River Watershed Coalition, and in concert with the steering committee that is developing a watershed management plan for the river.
- Throughout the project, Corps members will be working alongside the neighbors affected by environmental justice challenges, on efforts that they have requested and initiated.

Common Ground has partnered with organizations that share our commitment to environmental justice, and who also have strong and deep connections to the community:

- **Connecticut Fund for the Environment** uses legal and scientific expertise and brings people together to achieve results that benefit our environment for current and future generations. This commitment to “bring people together” to promote environmental health is reflected in CFE's work on the West River. For instance, CFE has partnered

with Common Ground students to measure water quality in the river, engaged our students and residents in cleaning up the West River shore line, and led environmental walks along the river. CFE is organizing broad-based citizen participation in the development of a management plan for the West River Watershed, and plays a significant support role for the West River Watershed Coalition.

- **Urban Resources Initiative** works to foster environmental stewardship and human development in the New Haven area by promoting citizen participation and community action through education, institutional co-operation and professional guidance. URI's Community Greenspace program empowers New Haven residents to join forces with their neighbors in revitalizing abandoned public lands, parks, curb strips and front yards. URI's has 3 primary objectives for the Community Greenspace program: community building, environmental restoration and stewardship. However, the aims of the 1,000 volunteers who carry out the 50 local projects are their own.

D. Project Description

Project Results. Between September 2015 and September 2016, Common Ground will engage the 30+ members of Green Jobs Corps in at least 35 paid work opportunities, working to improve the environmental health of their communities. Through their work, Corps members will:

- *Make real contributions to environmental health in the here and now:* by planting 100 urban street trees in predominately low-income neighborhoods, working intensively with residents to increase the environmental health impact of 4-6 neighborhood greenspaces, creating and stewarding bioswales and other green infrastructure strategies.
- *Step forward as a new generation of environmental justice leaders:* by ensuring that 100% successfully complete all aspects of the program, and that they demonstrate increased capacity to lead, increased understanding of environmental health issues, and increased commitment to pursue environmental careers after completing the program.
- *Build the capacity of other environmental justice leaders and leadership development efforts:* by conducting and sharing results of surveys of 4 major tributaries of the West River, engaging 350+ neighborhood residents around clean air and clean water issues, developing a web platform and broad-based public education tools that reach several thousand people, and engaging 25 educators in workshops that build their capacity to create a new generation of environmental justice leaders.

Project Activities. Common Ground seeks a \$30,000 grant for Green Jobs Corps – the program that will create the results describes above.

Green Jobs Corps, a model youth employment program now in its fifth year, is open to the 185 students of Common Ground High School. Based on a competitive application process, and on our commitment to serve low-income young people who experience barriers to career success, we select 30-35 Corps members. The Corps that results from this process is uniquely equipped to address environmental justice issues: More than 80% qualify for free and reduced lunch, more than 90% are young people of color, more than 90% are from New Haven, and 100% have expressed desire to improve environmental health conditions in their community.

Once students join the Corps, they dive into a year-long program. Paid environmental work experiences – 6 to 12 weeks in length, 5 to 25 hours per week – are the defining feature of the Green Jobs Corps. These work placements are fit into seasonal cycles. Each member takes on up to three

work placements per year; for instance, Corps members help to lead environmental education programs for more than 1,600 children per year, support maintenance of community gardens across New Haven, and help to operate our city's farmers markets. We propose to mobilize EPA support to support two youth employment opportunities: West River Stewards and Greenskills interns.

In the coming year, West River Stewards will:

- Conduct and share results from citizen surveys of four major tributaries of the West River, working in partnership with residents of the neighborhoods abutting these tributaries. These stream surveys will contribute to the development of a comprehensive watershed management plan, led by Connecticut Fund for the Environment and a steering committee of watershed residents, and developed in alignment with the EPA's 9 elements for watershed planning. They will also build constituencies for these tributaries by building the understanding and commitment of residents to these urban waters.
- Develop a web-based platform that uses a google maps interface to share photos, stream and outfall surveys, community events, and other information gathered by and relevant to the residents of the West River Watershed. This web platform will be built on a Wordpress base, and will increase the capacity of the grassroots West River Watershed Coalition to engage new members and share the results of their work with the public.
- Plan and lead stewardship activities that improve access to the river – e.g., trash and invasive removal and interpretive trail development at the Pond Lily Nature Preserve, where a major dam removal project is introducing the possibility of significant improvements in water quality and public access to the river.
- Implement community education projects that respond to water quality challenges, including (1) educational workshops at New Haven K-8 schools that directly abut the river, (2) presentations to students in Common Ground High School's Environmental Justice and senior seminar courses, and (3) door-to-door outreach to promote household-level green infrastructure responses.

EPA support will allow Common Ground to engage 3-5 West River stewards during each of the 3 Green Jobs Corps program seasons. In the fall and spring, Stewards will work for 6 hours per week, meeting each Saturday for 9 weeks. In summer 2015, Stewards will meet for 8 hours per week for 5 weeks. West River Stewards will work under the supervision of David Edgeworth, a Common Ground Biology and Environmental Research teacher with extensive experience related to water quality, aquatic organisms, and engaging young people in environmental projects. Staff from the Connecticut Fund for the Environment will train and support students as they take on this work.

GreenSkills Interns will improve urban air and water quality by addressing disproportionate access to green infrastructure – including street trees, greenspaces, and bioswales – in low income New Haven neighborhoods. Corps members will partner with the Urban Resources Initiative to:

- Plant and survey at least 100 street trees in neighborhoods that currently lack an adequate tree canopy. They take turns leading the safety talk and monitoring the group's progress, and they will also interact with the neighborhood residents who have requested trees, instructing them in how to steward the newly planted trees. Corps members will plant trees in locations across the city, enabling them to learn how to engage a variety of neighborhoods.
- Conduct door-to-door outreach to invite residents to request urban street trees in front of their homes – focusing entirely on predominately low income communities of color that have disproportionately low street tree cover.

- Maintain 8-12 curbcut bioswales located in the West River watershed. These bioswales are part of a project to test and demonstrate their impact on storm-water quantity and water quality. Additional bioswales will be created based on the availability of other funding.
- Join with citizens groups from low-income, racially diverse New Haven neighborhoods in taking on significant stewardship and improvement efforts at 4-6 city parts and community greenspaces. Guided by greenspace goals set by the neighborhood, they will work side by side with residents to plant trees and shrubs in curb strips, restore abandoned lots using native species, remove impermeable surfaces and replace them with plantings chosen to absorb storm-water runoff, and enact other strategies that improve urban air quality and water quality. The greenspaces – including West River Memorial Park, Beaver Ponds Park, and Dover Beach – have been chosen because they (1) are located in low-income communities and communities of color that experience barriers to access to clean air and clean water, (2) present significant value in managing storm-water runoff and clean water challenges, and (3) have been identified as priority areas by neighborhood residents.
- Lead educational activities for public audiences, including (1) students in Common Ground's Environmental Justice and Senior Seminar courses, and (2) neighborhood residents and public officials, sharing the impact of their work.

In fall 2015 and spring 2016, 20 Corps members (10 in each season) will take on internships focused on improving and monitoring the urban forest. In summer 2016, 6 Corps members will focus on greenspace improvement and stewardship. Students work under the supervision of graduate students from the Yale School of Forestry, and with staff from URI. For the first two weeks of the internship, the supervisors play a more active role in the planting, modeling a good work ethic and demonstrating proper practices. As the season progresses, they will take on more of a leadership role. The GreenSkills teams will also move through a structured curriculum, focused on ecosystem services, clean air and clean water, effective communication with neighborhood residents, and professionalism. Spring and fall crews will operate for 6 hours per week for 8 weeks per season. To facilitate work with these greenspace groups – which most often take on work evenings and on weekends – the team will meet from noon to 7 pm Wed-Thur-Fri, and from 10 to 5 on Saturdays.

With renewed EPA support, The West River Stewards and Greenskills crews will be able to take on the substantially new and different work described above – building on past efforts, responding to input from community members, and tightly aligned with other local neighborhood-based environmental justice efforts. In addition to these new on-the-ground efforts, we are planning a number of improvements. For instance, we will:

- Create new assistant leader positions on each of our West River Stewards and GreenSkills crews – providing an opportunity for continued leadership development for returning Corps members. Assistant leaders will (1) model and coach other members on community outreach activities, (2) be responsible for logistics related to tools and equipment, and (3) earn a higher wage than other crew members.
- Develop and share tools – including a day-long workshop at Common Ground and an online toolkit – that will help like-minded organizations and schools from across New England engage young people in environmental justice efforts, using Green Jobs Corps as a model. The workshop will include interactions with and presentations by Corps members and neighborhood partners, observations of work placements, presentations by on core program elements, and planning time for workshop participants to adapt the

Green Jobs Corps model to their home communities. The online toolkit will feature program descriptions, participant reflections, curricula, and participant assessment tools. We will promote these resources to public schools, employment programs, community organizations, and environmental justice groups throughout New England and New York.

Environmental Protection Agency support will allow us to engage Corps members in these two environmental justice work opportunities. Additional funding from other sources – including the Workforce Investment Act, the Long Island Sound Futures Fund, People’s United Community Foundation, and others, provide supports and opportunities that complement these environmental work opportunities. For instance, every Corps member participates in a year-long leadership and career development program – including workshops on career planning, the job search process, and employability skills, and field trips and job shadows to environmental work placements. Corp members also meet with the Green Jobs Corps Manager to check in on workplace success, and receive referrals to additional services as necessary (including academic enrichment programs, social work services, etc.). Common Ground continues to track and support Corps members for at least a year after they graduate high school. Green Jobs Corps is a long-term investment in our students’ capacity to become environmental and community leaders.

Impact on Community Capacity. In addition to the direct environmental health impacts of their work – e.g., number of street trees planted – the program will lead to the following community capacity-building outputs and outcomes:

<i>Green Jobs Corps members will ...</i>	<i>As measured by ...</i>
<i>Step forward as a new generation of environmental justice leaders</i>	% and # of Corps members who complete the program (target: 100%, 30) % of participants who demonstrate increased environmental leadership capacity, as measured by electronic leadership portfolio, evaluated by panel of community members, and by survey of leadership skills & attitudes connected to each work placement (target: 100%) % of program participants indicating they plan to pursue environmental careers and/or college majors (target: 40%)
<i>Build the capacity of other environmental justice leaders and leadership development efforts</i>	# of streams surveyed with neighborhood residents, contributing to completion of a watershed management plan (target: 4 streams, 1 plan) # of community residents engaged through direct stewardship and education activities (target: 350) # of residents educated through broad-based online outreach efforts – including news stories, the West River online platform, blog posts, etc. (target: 2,500)

Relevance to Environmental Statutes. All EPA funding will go directly to support work in pursuit of the following environmental statutes:

- Clean Water Act, Section 104(b) (3): Corps members will work with our project partners and community members to conduct demonstration projects, trainings, and studies relating to the causes, effects, extent, prevention, reduction, and elimination of water pollution – with a particular focus on the West River, a waterway identified by the EPA as impaired, and on the clean water value of urban street trees and greenspaces.

- Clean Air Act, Section 103(b)(3): Corps members will partner with community organizations and residents to conduct demonstration projects, and studies (including monitoring) related to the extent, prevention, and control of air pollution – mobilizing urban street trees and greenspaces as a proven resource for improving urban air quality.

Partner Roles. Common Ground has engaged two strong partners to put this plan into action:

- **New Haven Urban Resources Initiative.** URI staff and Yale Forestry School graduate students will train and mentor the Green Jobs Corps GreenSkills Team, facilitate their connections with neighborhood greenspace groups and residents requesting street trees, lead curriculum focused on environmental justice and health issues, and supervise and evaluate their green infrastructure work across the city.
- **Connecticut Fund for the Environment/Save the Sound.** Working with the West River Stewards, the staff of CFE is ready to: (1) offer training and technical assistance on necessary to conduct stream inventories on the tributaries of the West River, (2) provide feedback and guidance as West River Stewards develop public education resources, (3) partner with Common Ground students and staff to identify and implement stewardship projects, in alignment with other important activities along the river, and (4) mobilize relationships with neighborhood residents and grassroots environmental groups.

E. Organizational Capacity and Programmatic Capability

Common Ground has the programmatic capacity and experience to take on the work described in this proposal. We have successfully operated environmentally focused youth employment programs for more than 15 years, and have received certificates of recognition from the EPA for these programs. For eight years, we have partnered with the Urban Resources Initiative to create work placements planting and surveying street trees across the City of New Haven. Five years ago, we re-organized our youth employment efforts into a more ambitious, comprehensive effort to create the next generation of community environmental leaders: Green Jobs Corps.

Over the last five years, we have developed and refined a model for managing Green Jobs Corps that results in real impact and delivery on program goals. The Program Manager develops and manages compliance with partnership agreements with all program partners, ensures adequate supervision and evaluation of Corps members while on the job, and coordinates all wraparound supports provided to Corps members. The Program Manager is supervised by Joel Tolman, Director of Impact & Engagement, who developed the original plans for Green Jobs Corps and helped to steer its development. Betsy Sneath, Director of Business and Administration, oversees all financial reporting and accounting; Betsy has played a leadership role at Common Ground for 15 years. The program also receives high-level oversight from Melissa Spear, Executive Director, and ongoing support from representatives from each of our partner organizations.

Common Ground also has proven experience implementing programs and grants of this scale. We have successfully administered grants from the Environmental Protection Agency and a variety of federal, state and local agencies. In 2013-14, we managed a total of \$2.685 million in state and federal funding. Our staff is experienced in the specific reporting, financial management, and oversight responsibilities that come with EPA funding.

F. Qualifications of the Principal Investigator or Project Manager (PI/PM)

Common Ground and our partners have the staff capacity in place to ensure Green Jobs Corps

delivers the results described in this proposal. Green Jobs Corps is managed by Tom Gaudio, who has successfully led the program for the last four years. In 2013-14, under Tom's leadership, 32 Corps members successfully completed all aspects of the program. Corps members completed 170 work placements with 5 community environmental organizations, earning more than \$75,000 in family income. In the last year, members of Green Jobs Corps led educational programs for more than 1,600 children, helped grow and distribute more than 12,000 pounds of local produce, and built and tended more than a dozen community gardens, among other contributions to the environment and health.

Tom's responsibilities include overseeing all paperwork and performance measurement associated with past EPA funding, and with funding from the federal Workforce Investment Act. Under his leadership, the program has been recognized as the highest performing youth program funded by the Workforce Alliance, which administers WIA funding in our region. Tom is appointed to our local Workforce Investment Act Youth Council in recognition of his leadership capacity and the effectiveness of the Green Jobs Corps program. Prior to taking on leadership of Green Jobs Corps, Tom served for two years as Common Ground's After-School Program Coordinator. In this capacity, he oversaw an \$112,000 budget supported by the federal 21st Century Learning Community program, including all grant-related data gathering and reporting.

G. Past Performance in Reporting on Outputs and Outcomes

Common Ground's **Green Jobs Corps** was funded through a grant from the EPA Environmental Justice Small Grants Program in Fiscal Year 2013 (EQ 96 1729 01). As shared in interim and final reports to EPA, we have met or exceeded the vast majority of the outputs and outcomes outlined in our previous grant proposal. In particular, the 32 members of Green Jobs Corps (target: 30) successfully completed 35 work placements (target: 35), through which they planted 168 street trees (target: 100), identified and surveyed more than 40 outfalls into the West River (target: 4), improved the health value of 24 neighborhood greenspaces (target: 24), and engaged or educated at least 294 community residents (target: 240). One hundred percent of these Corps members successfully completed the program (target: 100%), and 54% expressed a serious interest in pursuing environmental careers and college degrees after participating in the program (target: 40%). (Grant Contact: Stacey Johnson, 617.918.1552, johnson.stacey@epa.gov).

Prior to the last three years, Common Ground has received several grants from the Environmental Protection Agency, and has delivered on all outcomes and reporting expectations connected to those grants. In addition, Common Ground has engaged in several other EPA-funded efforts, and been recognized for our efforts by the EPA:

- Common Ground High School was recognized as U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon School, presented in partnership with the EPA.
- Common Ground's School Director, Liz Cox, was one of the first round of recipients of the Presidential Award for Innovation in Environmental Education.
- Common Ground successfully met all outcomes associated with a subgrant through the EPA's Environmental Education grant to the Northeast Environmental Education Association, allowing us to create professional development for Connecticut teachers.

H. Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) Information

The proposed project does not, we believe, involve any of the activities that trigger the creation of a Quality Assurance Project Plan.